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IRISH SUPERSTITIONS.

SIR—As the following superstitious practices, which were very prevalent some short time since in this part of our island, are now flitting fast away in the march of intellect, it may not be uninteresting to some of your readers to know that such things were at one time looked upon as matters of great importance :

Never to stand at the door of a house while a funeral is passing.

If your friend is going on a journey, not to neglect throwing your slipper after him, as he will then have success.

If the fire burns at one side of the grate, and not at the other, some one will soon leave the house.

If a coal or cinder flies out of the fire towards any particular person, that person will get a purse soon if it is round and hollow, and a coffin, if it is long and hollow.

Never relate a story in the day-time, or whistle at night.

Never attempt to churn milk without putting three pinches of salt into the churn, mentioning, at the same time, the three Persons of the Trinity.

Should you find it difficult to churn butter, go to a boundary river, that is, a river which separates one parish from another, and get a mouth full of the water, and put it on the ground under the churn, and, without doubt, your butter will soon gather ; or put the churn behind the door, or put the poker in the fire, or make the sign of the cross with the staff.

When you hear a person speak in his sleep, put his hand into a basin of warm water, and he'll tell you all his secrets.

If a nail should enter your foot, prevent it if possible from getting rusty, or the foot will mortify.

Go to a tree full of leaves nine mornings, fasting, and tell it a dream, and at the termination of that time, there will not be a single leaf on the tree—it will be quite withered and faded.

Never tell a dream fasting to any living person.

If you walk backwards, or look into a looking-glass at night, you will certainly see Old Nick.

To see one magpye is sorrow, and two is mirth ;

Three is a wedding, and four is a birth.

When a dog howls opposite a house at midnight, some one in that house will soon die.

If a raven hovers over a house and croaks, some one in that house will soon die.

If an infant, before it is christened, is fed out of a raven's scull, it will ever after be able to understand what ravens say, or the raven's language.

If a child, whose parents are unknown, is fed with a raven's scull, when it comes to maturity it will be acquainted with every thing concerning them.

If you find a pod, with nine peas in it, and put it behind the door, the first person that comes in, will be the name of your husband or wife.

When you perceive the new moon on the first night, turn what money you may have in your pocket, saying three times, " God bless the new moon," and spitting on the money.

If you keep water in a house after washing your feet, the fairies will be washing in it all night.

A crowing hen, and a whistling woman, are not fit to be kept about a house.

When moving into a new house, let the first things you bring into it be a little coal and salt.

MITES.

Mites are those very small creatures generally found in great abundance in decayed cheese. To the naked eye they appear like moving particles of dust ; but the microscope discovers them to be animals perfect in all their members—as perfect as creatures that exceed them many millions of times in bulk.

They are usually transparent. Their principal parts are head, neck, and body. The head is small in proportion to the body, with a sharp snout, and a mouth that opens like a mole's. They have two little eyes, and are extremely quick-sighted. If you touch them but once with a pin or needle, you will perceive how readily they

avoid a second touch. Some have six legs, and others eight, which proves that there are different sorts, though in every other respect they appear alike. Each leg has six joints, surrounded with hairs, and two little claws at the extremity thereof, which can easily take up any thing. The hinder part of the body is plump and bulky, and ends in an oval form, with a few exceedingly long hairs growing therefrom. Other parts of the body and head are thinly set with hairs.

The female mite lays eggs so small, that ninety-one millions and one hundred thousand of them would not be larger than a common pigeon's egg. The young ones come out of the shell with all their members perfect : and though they cast their skins several times before they are full-grown, yet they do not alter in shape. Their eggs, in warm weather, hatch in twelve or fourteen days ; but in winter, or cold weather, not under several weeks.

Mites are voracious animals, and will devour not only cheese, but fish, flesh, fruits, grain of all sorts, and almost every thing that is moist, without being over wet ; nay, they may sometimes be seen preying on one another.

It must be remembered that there are several kinds of mites, differing in some things, though in general nature and appearance the same. For instance, mites in malt-dust and oatmeal are nimbler than cheese-mites. The mites among figs have two feelers at the snout, and two very long horns over them, with three legs on each side, and are more sluggish than those in malt.

PRESSURE OF FLUIDS.

In any fluid the particles that are below bear the weight of those that are above, and there is therefore a pressure among them increasing in exact proportion to the perpendicular depth, and not influenced by the size, or shape, or position of the containing vessel.

The atoms of matter having gravity, it is evident that the upper layer of any mass of fluid must be supported by the second, and this, with its load, by the third, and the third, with its double load, by the fourth, and so on.

A tube, of which the area is an inch square, holds, in two feet of its length, nearly a pound of water ; hence, the general truth, well worth recollecting, that the pressure of water at any depth, whether on the side of a vessel or on its bottom, or any body immersed, is nearly one pound on the square inch for every two feet of depth. The striking effects from the increase of pressure in a fluid, at great depths, are of course most commonly exhibited at sea. The following instances will illustrate them :

If a strong, square glass bottle, empty and firmly corked, be sunk in water, its sides are generally crushed inwards by the pressure before it reaches a depth of ten fathoms. A chamber of air, similarly let down, with a man in it, would soon allow him to be drowned by the water bursting in upon him, as really happened to an ignorant projector.

When a ship founders in shallow water, the wreck, on breaking to pieces, generally comes to the surface, and is cast upon the beach ; but when the accident happens in deep water, the great pressure at the bottom forces water into the pores of the wood, and makes it so heavy that no part can ever rise again to reveal her fate.—*Arnot's Physics.*

Captain Scoresby, in the course of his experiments on the impregnation of wood with sea-water, let down a strong oblong vessel of copper to a depth of 3040 feet, and allowed it to remain an hour and a half, but the enormous pressure to which it was subjected, being about 50 tons, (a ton per square inch), crushed the vessel, though every part was an arch, into an irregular flat form, and tore the copper in four different places.

CONJUGAL AFFECTION.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GELLERT.

The tender-hearted Araminta loved her husband sincerely, for they had been but two months married ; he constituted her sole felicity—their desires and aversions were the same. It was Araminta's study, by diligent attention, to anticipate her husband's wishes. " Such a wife " says my male reader, who entertains thoughts of

matrimony, "such a wife would I desire"—and such a wife may'st thou possess. Araminta's husband fell sick of a very dangerous malady. "No hope," said the physician, and shook his awful wig. Bitterly wept Araminta. "Oh, Death! might I prefer a petition? Spare, oh spare my husband, and let me be the victim in his stead!"

Death, to her astonishment, straight appeared. "And what," cried the grim tyrant, "is thy request?" "There," said Araminta, trembling with fear and amazement, "there he lies, pierced with intolerable agony; he implores thy speedy relief—put him instantly out of his misery."



Engraved by Clayton.

Sketched by A. Nichol, Esq.

RUINS OF BALLAGH CHURCH.

The above interesting ruin lies at the foot of the Mourne mountains, near Newcastle. It is another of those picturesque objects of which we spoke in a former Number, in describing the bold and magnificent line of coast from Rostrevor to Tullymore Park, and to which we shall have occasion again to allude in some future article.

LOVER'S LEGENDS AND STORIES.

Weil had it been for Mr. Samuel Lover's fair fame had he rested satisfied with the success of his *first volume of Legends and Stories*. His *Second Series*, the work now before us, we pronounce a decided failure. The stories which Mr. Lover picked up through the country, and by the *viva voce* recitation of which he was in the habit of enlivening the social circle, there can be no question he has in his first volume transferred to *print* in an admirable manner. The stories in the present volume are altogether of another character or description, and, with a single exception, are any thing but good. In truth, Mr. Lover appears incapable of writing an original story: the Spanish Boar and the Irish Bull, an attempt at originality, is one of the most miserable things we have ever seen in print. The "Fairy Finder" is little more than another version of the "Leprawhaun," which appeared in the 91st Number of our Journal. Barney O'Reardon is certainly the best in the volume, and yet this, besides having appeared in the *University Magazine*, the curious reader will find (the perfect skeleton of it at least) in the last edition of "Joe Miller." "The Legend of the White Horse of the Feppers" is the second best, and from the extract we give of it, our readers may form their own opinion of the merits of the work.

In speaking of "Irish Story Tellers," we have more than once heard individuals institute a comparison relative to the merits of Carleton and Lover. It has ever been our decided and avowed opinion, an opinion which we consider fully borne out by the present volume and a volume just published by Carleton, that in this consists the difference between the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" by the latter, and the "Legends and Stories" of the former, that Carleton is no mere retailer of stories he has heard—he sketches from life, with the boldness and vigour of an original artist; while Lover can re-tell a story he himself has heard, but at the same time appears altogether deficient of the prime ingredient in an Irish story-teller—there is nothing whatever of originality in any of his sketches; wherever he has attempted this, the failure is at once apparent. Why he should have brought out the present volume unaccompanied by illustrations similar to those which carried off so many of his former series, we cannot imagine. The wood-cuts are excellent in their way, they are, however, but poor substitutes for the spirited outline sketches on copper with which the first volume was illustrated. In reference to remarks which we have observed in some Irish periodicals relative to the work being published in England, we think it only fair to state that it is within the compass of our own knowledge, that Mr. Lover was offered for the second series, by the Dublin publisher who purchased his first series, a sum much beyond what we feel quite convinced the book will ever produce; and while there can be no blame to Mr. Lover for making the most of his writings, we think it scarcely fair to blame the Irish publishers for not giving more for the copy-right than they might consider its real value.